

Abstract

Stented tubular grafts of expanded, sintered polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE). The stented PTFE grafts of the present invention include an integrally stented embodiment, an externally stented embodiment, and an internally stented embodiment. In each embodiment, the stent may be either self-expanding or pressure-expandable. Also, in each embodiment, the stent may be coated or covered with a plastic material capable of being affixed (e.g., heat fused) to PTFE.

Manufacturing methods are also disclosed by the individual components of the stented grafts are preassembled on a mandrel and are subsequently heated to facilitate attachment of the PTFE layer(s) to one another and/or to the stent. Optionally, the stented graft may be post-flexed and post-expanded following its removal from the mandrel to ensure that the stented graft will be freely radially expandable and/or radially contractible over its full intended range of diameters.